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comp. by

Edna D. Bullock

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American Library Association
PUBLISHING BOARD
LIBRARY HANDBOOK, NO. 3

MANAGEMENT
OF
TRAVELING LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY
EDNA D. BULLOCK

ADOPTED FOR USE BY THE LEAGUE OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONS

A.L.A. PUBLISHING BOARD
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TRAVELING LIBRARIES

Introduction. The pioneer tract on traveling libraries* was written by F. A. Hutchins in 1899. In 1901 the Home education department at Albany published an extended bulletin † on the subject. Various articles have also appeared in the magazines and library periodicals.

It is now designed to supplement the two earlier tracts with regard to the history of the subject, and to discuss the new phases of its development — but most of all, to go into detail concerning the actual management of traveling library systems for the guidance of those who may be called upon to put new systems into operation. For this purpose, the methods in use by the various state systems of traveling libraries will be used as a basis — the trend of development being so largely along the line of state and county systems. The statistical information given is corrected to May, 1906.

In the following pages, the term "traveling library" is used to designate a collection of books lent to a community for general reading. Traveling libraries in which the original combination of books remains unchanged are said to be operated in "fixed" sets. Traveling libraries which are made up anew for each trip from a general stock of books are said to be operated on the "open shelf" plan. A "study library" is a fixed collection of books on a topic or series of topics. A "special loan" collection is an open shelf assortment of books from which special loans of one or more books may be made to individuals, clubs, institutions, and schools. Special loans of books are, therefore, for students rather than for the general reader.

Traveling libraries. In 1901, traveling libraries had been authorized by law in twenty states. In sixteen of these, the

* Published by A.L.A. Publishing Board. Price 5 cents.

† No. 40. Price 25 cents.

libraries were in the direct charge of state libraries or library commissions. A revision of the list published by New York reads as follows: —

"States legalizing traveling libraries with dates when systems were recognized."

1892 New York
1895 Michigan
1895 Montana (Appropriations never became available.)
1896 Iowa
1896 Ohio
1897 Wisconsin
1898 New Jersey (First appropriation made in 1899.)
1899 Delaware (Since 1899 an annual appropriation has been made for traveling libraries for schools. The Commission was appointed in 1901.)
1899 Illinois (An appropriation to Illinois farmers' institute.)
1899 Indiana
1899 Kansas
1899 Maine
1899 Minnesota
1899 North Dakota (An annual appropriation for the Department of public instruction.)
1899 Pennsylvania
1900 Vermont
1901 Idaho
1901 Nebraska
1901 North Carolina (An appropriation for school libraries.)
1901 Washington
1902 Maryland
1903 California
1903 Colorado
1903 Connecticut
1905 Oregon

In 1904 the Virginia legislature passed a law permitting the lending of books from the state library outside the city of Richmond, and looking towards a state system of traveling libraries.

This wonderful record of growth from the idea promulgated by Mr Melvil Dewey in 1892 is a most significant testimonial not only that illiteracy is becoming unpopular, but that good taste in reading is to become an American habit. Time was when some of our scholars thought that bad reading was better than none at all. A well known teacher of English literature at one of our large universities stated to one of his classes twenty years ago that it would be better for people to read even the "Fireside companion" than to have no reading at all. In those days our rural population had little or nothing to read. Magazines were expensive, and the almanacs and county papers made a very meager literary diet. Even the doubtful good of having the cheap weekly papers thrust into the dooryard was denied the average farm home.

In these days, when the farmer is just as close to the heart of the world as the rest of us, if he chooses to be, he is greeted by a bewildering opportunity for choice among mediocre and even more vicious publications than were common twenty years ago. There are capable men and women, highly cultivated and useful citizens, whose early reading was largely of the character then current in the cheap weeklies; but who shall dare to prophesy that the youth of to-day, whose literary excursions take him into the company of "Buster Brown" and "Happy Hooligan," will have an even chance with the youth of a generation ago to develop into a useful and law abiding citizen? The influence of the dukes, haughty countesses, swaggering pirates, and common ruffians, of those days was certainly not so quickly transmuted into bad conduct as that of the current yellow favorite.

Isolation had its advantages for the people on our farms. To-day, the farmer's lad, only less than his city contemporary, has the worst that our times afford thrust upon him.

In the cities, the public libraries are alive to the necessity of getting people to read, and to read that which is, at least, not distinctly harmful, with strenuous efforts to promote the more vigorous and helpful sort of reading. That those in charge of traveling library systems are fully conscious that wise selection of the books means much to the commonwealths whose interests they serve, may be seen from the character of the books they are sending to the villages, country schools and farm houses. It is recorded of one well selected and combined collection of 40 volumes that in three years it traveled over 2000 miles, and had 918 recorded loans in 28 months of actual circulation, in 8 different neighborhoods. Only 64% of this circulation was fiction, so that these encouraging figures show that the miscellaneous books are being read and appreciated. What the general result of the circulation of this better class of books in more-or-less bookless communities is, no one may definitely know — but the librarian of any system of traveling libraries could find in the correspondence of her office innumerable and eloquent testimonials of the good work that is being done. So general is the belief that this class of literature will help people to live on farms and in villages more intelligently, and therefore more contentedly, that state workers in farmers' institutes have persistently acted as advocates of traveling libraries, with excellent and immediate results in many cases

Advertising the traveling library. The work of pushing the traveling library out where it is needed requires of the executive of the system, tireless energy, intimate acquaintance with conditions and people, an uncommon degree of inventive genius, and a thorough knowledge of the principles of advertising. To attempt to put into operation and maintain a system of traveling libraries without these qualities means a limited use of the libraries.

The first libraries sent out by a new system are usually eagerly sought for by well posted citizens who have learned through the newspapers that traveling libraries are to be

had. This demand is not great, and people must be educated and a demand created. Newspapers are usually glad to give space to the subject at reasonable intervals — and these intervals should not be too great. The press directory of the state will enable the workers to get into communication with the country editors by means of circular letters, and better still, by personal correspondence. In turn, the matter should be brought to the attention of every organization in the state that could in any way give wider publicity to the subject. The state educational directory enables one to address city and county superintendents of schools, and frequently the individual teacher may be reached by mail through the printed county educational directories. The state Federation of women's clubs, the state officers of other semi-literary and fraternal organizations, the officers and instructors of farmers' institutes and granges, the state home mission secretaries of various religious denominations, should be vigorously used, not once, but often. Many of these will be glad to carry a few application cards and circulars with them, as they go their rounds, and put them where they will do some good. The Newspaper union can be induced to accept traveling library material for the insides of country papers.

Field work. It will invariably be found that the communities that need the books most are the last to find out that there are books to be had, so that no opportunity to spread information about the libraries should ever be lost. In a state 400 miles by 200 miles in extent, with only a million and a half of people, it takes a long time to reach the inner consciousness of the remote districts. After all has been done that may be done from the traveling library center, it will be found that it is most difficult to keep a large number of libraries in circulation, and especially to get them into the out-of-the-way places. The conclusion is inevitable that a worker must be sent out from the center to put life into the advertising of the traveling library. Clear out to the edges of things, the news must be carried. This field

worker would do well to take traveling libraries along to be left here and there. A talk given at a county teachers' meeting, or a farmers' institute, accompanied by an actual library usually results in putting that library out into the farming or ranch country. Traveling library booths at state fairs, Chautauquas, organized agriculture meetings, state teachers' associations, and places where the more energetic people of the state congregate, help in the business of advertising. There is reason to believe, however, that the best results will never be obtained until the field worker can go to the remote places systematically, get the people together, present the matter and actually show them the books. Before such a stupendous task, the field worker whose field is a whole state, and that a large one, may well stand aghast.

County traveling libraries. What promises to be something of a relief to the state traveling library center seems to be coming with the county traveling library idea. As is the case in much of our library extension progress, Wisconsin is the most active pioneer in this direction. The partial text of the Wisconsin law reads as follows —

"The board of supervisors of any county may establish a board of libraries and elect 5 directors thereof, of either sex. The said board of libraries may appoint a supervising librarian for such county traveling libraries, at a salary not to exceed $50 per annum, whose duty it shall be to arrange the books in their cases and repair them when slightly injured, keep the records, instruct the librarians of county traveling libraries in their duties, and perform such other duties as directed by the said board. It shall be the duty of the board of libraries to purchase suitable books for the county traveling libraries, arrange them in proper cases and distribute such cases of books to as many districts, as equally distant from each other as their means will permit, with the object of finally serving libraries within easy reach of all the people of the county. Such traveling libraries may be located at suitable places in any town, village, or city within the county, and not permitted to remain in one location

longer than 6 months, except on application of not less than 5 patrons holding cards in such library, when such time may be extended not to exceed 30 days. On such removal another library may be loaned in its place successively for similar periods.

"For the purpose of such county traveling libraries, any county may appropriate the first year not to exceed $500 and thereafter annually not to exceed $200. The Wisconsin free library commission may advise any board of libraries as far as practicable in the conduct of its work."

Thirteen Wisconsin counties have availed themselves of this law, one of them receiving support for the traveling libraries by private gifts of funds. While the Wisconsin free library commission does not directly control these county systems, it has advisory powers which Wisconsin counties are not slow to take advantage of. If the library selected as a county center is in charge of a suitable librarian, with a board that appreciates the opportunity for helpfulness that has come to their library, it will be possible to reach more of the people who need to be reached than the state center, however well equipped, can hope to do.

The Iowa legislature of 1905 enlarged the power of library trustees by providing for the use of public libraries by residents of county or township outside of city or town. By this law libraries may become available in the following manner —

"Said board of library trustees shall have power to contract with the trustees of the township or the board of supervisors of the county in which the library is situated, or of adjacent townships or counties, or with the trustees or governing bodies of any neighboring towns or cities not having library facilities for the public, to loan the books of the said library, either singly or in groups, upon such terms as may be agreed upon in such contract."

This law further gives county boards of supervisors, township trustees, and governing boards of cities or towns the power to levy taxes to be expended in carrying out such

contracts. Thus, any library in Iowa may become a traveling-library center.

North Carolina made possible a system of county school traveling libraries in 1901. This is rather a system of exchanges among adjacent schools than a system of traveling libraries, and is limited to 6 schools in a county.

In Colorado, as in several other states, it is possible for the county commissioners to appropriate county money to provide library privileges for the citizens of the county. This may be accomplished either by lending individual books to individual borrowers, or by having substations to which traveling libraries are sent at intervals.

Minnesota's law is similar to that of Iowa, and it is the older of the two. Already 5 Minnesota counties have put the system into operation.

The county library idea will, it is hoped, make its way into the public consciousness with sufficient force to become law whenever counties have central libraries that can suitably take up the work. Without competent supervision from a center, any system of traveling libraries will be a failure, because the libraries will simply disappear.

Traveling library machinery. The administrative detail of a traveling library system should be as simple as possible; but the amount of detail is so great that only clear business judgment applied vigorously will keep it from becoming involved. The temptation to adopt elaborate machinery is great, and new commissions will find it a great advantage to adopt a few simple forms, adding to them gradually and very cautiously.

The selection of books. The first problem is, of course, the selection of the books. They must be wholesome and readable, and as much more as may be without making them dull. People who have only a few books to select from soon feel discouraged if they find too much serious literature among them. The study clubs can use the heavier sort of reading, but this is more properly the work of a special loan department. There is an instance on record of the earlier traveling libraries of a series being so over-

loaded with serious literature that they had to be broken up, by a subsequent administration, and the more scholarly works retired. A traveling library, proper, comes closer to attaining desired results in giving a dozen people a chance to read "Colonel Carter," or a volume of Stoddard's "Lectures," or a life of Lincoln, than in prevailing upon one person to study a handbook of political economy; although the person who is capable of advancing by means of such study must be constantly kept in mind, and suitably provided for.

The traveling library should carry "sweetness and light" into the remote places, but especially the sweetness. Cheerful, clean and wholesome fiction is the most effective conductor of the sweetness, and not without its value as a transmitter of light. The traveling library need not cloud the sunlight of those fortunate people whose wealth is largely in room, fresh air, sunshine, and work to do, by forcing upon their attention unduly, the problem novel, when there are "Doctor Luke of the Labrador," "Rebecca," "Eben Holden" and "Emmy Lou" to be added to their experience.

The careful selection of the miscellaneous books is a matter of the greatest importance. Sprightly and well illustrated books of history and travel, readable and not too voluminous biographies, popular presentations of current social and economic questions, with a slight admixture of fine and useful arts, an occasional volume of essays, poetry, and suitable natural history constitute the general range of appropriate material. Now and then it is not unprofitable to include some book that may be more of a reference book than for casual reading — a book such as Hornaday's "American natural history." Such books are certain to be looked through by people who seldom read, and also are an encouragement to people who have a natural inclination to find out about things, but have few books. In general, the purpose of the miscellaneous books in a traveling library is to set people to thinking, and to help them think to some purpose.

Each state presents its own problems when it comes to

selection of books. A book on agriculture as practised by the truck farmers of New Jersey might or might not be of interest to a western farmer who raises corn, hogs, and cattle, on a large scale. A book on corn would be of small interest in Oregon or Washington, where the nights are too cold for corn growing.

There are said to be not more than 2500 titles really suitable for traveling libraries. Many commissions, therefore, duplicate largely. It would seem the part of wisdom for a new system to limit the purchases from the first appropriation largely to non-duplicates, and to books that are suitable for all sorts and conditions of men. Such books as Nansen's "Farthest north" are just as readable in a New Jersey fishing village as in the lumber camps of Wisconsin. Libraries made up from books so selected can be used in any kind of a community. With the second appropriation, usually, it would be wise to begin to duplicate. Some commissions purchase 5 copies of every book, in order to have 5 duplicate libraries. This selection of the first purchases for traveling libraries is so important that it would be a pity, indeed, for a new system to content itself with anything less than an experienced traveling library worker to select the books.

How to combine the books. The general practice is to make up collections of books, so combined as to be miniature public libraries for average communities. The usual proportion of fiction is greater than that in an average public library, for obvious reasons. In most traveling library systems, at least half of the books for adults are novels, and the juvenile books are similarly divided. In an agricultural state, this type of library answers very well. Where industries are diversified, or there are many communities of foreigners, or mining or lumber camps or fishing villages, or peculiar religious sects, there may be special collections of books to meet the needs of these particular communities.

In several states having within their borders large, compact communities of people of foreign birth, books in foreign languages are circulated, either in fixed sets, or as temporary

additions to ordinary traveling libraries. These books are intended for adults, who cannot be reached in any other way, and are chiefly books about the United States, her history, industries and affairs. The circulation of books in foreign languages should, obviously, be limited to reaching adults who cannot take up the language of our country.

In every system of traveling libraries, there must be some collections of books for schools, containing chiefly such books as are on the recommended lists of books for school libraries. The Iowa library commission has an open shelf collection of the books on the official list from which Iowa school districts select for their school libraries. Schools wishing to borrow these books make their own selections, and the individual books are charged to them. Other commissions prefer to have special fixed collections for young people, which are circulated among the schools.

Circulation of books among the schools, especially in states where school libraries are not abundant, is as profitable a method of using books as a traveling library system can employ. Letters to teachers pointing out the use that might be made of particular books are sent out by various systems, and every effort made to stimulate interest in and use of the books. Work of this sort with schools pays — for the next generation of school children will thus have a heritage of the reading habit.

In order to encourage serious reading, several commissions have included in each traveling library a few books on some one topic. Any traveling library system can easily adopt this "group plan" by attaching to libraries, temporarily, as special loans, books on any desired subject, if it is considered not to be desirable to attach them to the libraries permanently.

Fixed collection vs. open shelf selections.* For traveling library purposes, limited to putting good, general reading into places where reading is scarce, and for many people not otherwise reached and to encourage the establishment of

* For commissions using fixed or open shelf plan, see Traveling library statistics on page 25.

small, local libraries where none exist, the prevailing practise is that of the fixed collection — which gives the borrowing community little or no privilege of choice of books. Kansas, Ohio, New Jersey and Pennsylvania have (both for traveling library and for special study loans) the open shelf plan, and New York has adopted the plan for part of her books. All other state systems, so far as information is available, adhere to the fixed collection for the traveling libraries proper, though many of them maintain limited open shelf collections for special loans, and for books for schools, and in foreign languages.

The merits of the two plans cannot be properly set forth without considering the limitations already mentioned. The first function of a public library is to get books to the bookless — the best books that they can be induced to read, not as students, but as casual readers. The student's wants are attended to after those of the reading public have been, in part, satisfied. The smaller the library, the larger is the proportion of books for mere "reading" that it contains, and the very small library simply gets no hold on the community if it devotes its funds to purchasing Bryce's "American commonwealth" when its patrons want to meet such people as the "Virginian" or "Our little Russian cousin." The traveling library is a miniature public library, and must first take care of the general reader. This general, untrained reader, in a large majority of cases, has no absolute preference when it comes to books — any book that entertains being as good as any other book that entertains. If the reader happens to have a preference for "Mrs Wiggs," and finds that excellent lady "out," he can be tolerably well satisfied with "Emmy Lou."

The fundamental idea in the open shelf plan of traveling libraries is to give borrowers what they want, and what they need — with special reference to the differing needs of differing communities. Even in a small state, communities vary greatly, and the advocates of the open shelf plan believe that they can supply these differing needs more easily with a flexible collection of books.

New York, in part, and New Jersey have changed from the fixed to the open shelf plan for traveling libraries. Neither of these states presents typical conditions. The ample resources of New York make it possible for that state to have almost unlimited duplicates, and plenty of shelf room to store them when not in use, as well as sufficient clerical and administrative help to operate such a system. New Jersey is about the size of some of the counties in the generously fashioned western states, and has a population about equal to that of Iowa — which is another way of saying that when an Iowa traveling library is placed within the reach of 39 people, the New Jersey traveling library is within reach of 274 people. Pursuing the comparison still further — Iowa is an agricultural state with no other industries of any importance, in comparison. New Jersey has innumerable small truck farms, all connected by telephones, trolleys and some of the best automobile roads in the country — with many industries, including mining and fishing. The New Jersey commission is close enough to the people to be able to create special demands, and to respond to them with some accuracy. The New Jersey traveling library, when assembled ready for shipment, is a composite of what people have asked for, what is available, and what the Commission believes will meet the needs of the general reader in that particular community, plus a few books on the industries prevailing in the locality to which the books are going.

The traveling libraries of Iowa, Minnesota and other middle west and western states (excepting Kansas), represent, when assembled, the most expert and sympathetic judgment of their respective commissions as to what is most interesting, most desired, and profitable reading for the average community to which they send books. It is an ideal, balanced selection — not circumscribed by having to be selected from such books as happen to be in, as selection from an open shelf collection must always be unless an unlimited supply of books, many of them duplicates, is always on hand. In the fixed collection plan, the demands for books

on particular subjects made by patrons who know what they want, are met by special loans, either in connection with a traveling library or not. It is believed by these commissions that the greatest demand, which is for average books for average readers can be met far more economically and with just as much certainty of giving people what they want and what they need as by the other plan.

The administrative problems of circulating books in fixed collections are much simpler than those of the open shelf system. In the former, records are kept, principally with books in sets, while with the other methods, charging cards for each book must be filed, energy that might be devoted to something else spent on making a new selection each time, and typewritten lists of the temporary combination made. Lists of books previously sent to a place must be consulted, if duplicates are not to be sent, while the fixed collection with its permanent printed or mimeographed list, is dealt with by number, and duplication avoided, absolutely, with no extra time spent. The cost of administration of the open shelf plan is, therefore, perceptibly greater than by the old plan. Where any attempt is made to allow the borrowing community to make the selections, the center must be prepared to buy many duplicates of popular books, and to have room to shelve them when not in use. The borrowing community must be prepared to be told that some of the books asked for are out, that others have so limited a use that it is deemed inadvisable to purchase them, that other books are not considered desirable books to circulate at public expense, that more fiction has been asked for than seems best to send at one time, or that the children's wants have not been sufficiently recognized — and eventually, in many cases, what is sent is not what was asked for after all — and thus is open to the same criticism that may be made concerning a fixed collection. Under neither plan can people expect to get just what they want — although under either of them, people may get something that is really much better for the general average than what they wanted would have been.

Illustrative of the success of the fixed collection, even in peculiar communities, the schools at two villages, one popu-

lated by Bohemians and the other by Scandinavians are cited. Both of these communities have been benefited by the traveling libraries, and gratefully express their entire satisfaction with the libraries as they are. One of them asks for a school traveling library and the other one is satisfied with a standard library. Although the librarians are urged to ask for special books wanted by patrons, these two peculiar communities have been perfectly served with fixed collections selected and combined theoretically without reference to given conditions. When the traveling library, as in these cases, is kept at a school, the children of foreigners read many of the books under the teacher's direction, and read aloud at home to parents who may perhaps not read English, but who take great pride in the scholastic prowess of their children. Neither of these places could select for itself so well as the center could select for it.

Under this plan, when the librarian of a traveling library discovers that patrons desire certain books, or material on certain subjects, a special loan is asked for, to be sent immediately, or with the next library. A certain community is getting all of Stoddard's "Lectures" in this way, while others have special loans of books on birds, meteorology, inventions and other subjects. Frequently when a community evinces a desire to make its own selection of a majority of the books that constitute a traveling library coupled with ability to do it wisely, the books are bought and sent as special loans, afterwards being assigned to fixed collections. A certain ranch community, where the librarian takes care of the library largely for the satisfaction of seeing the late books, always gets a special loan of the very latest books — but these books do not constitute a traveling library. Generally traveling library stations must content themselves with such fiction as is contained in the regular traveling library, but isolated communities, expressing a desire for a few extra novels, or for certain titles, have these sent as special loans with the library. A small open shelf collection of less than 100 titles at the center

should take care of this extra demand for fiction for a state with a population of over a million people.

This combination plan has been found so good that there is small likelihood of its being abandoned for the open shelf method in its entirety. The aim is to give the most profitable reading, to give everybody who has any serious purpose just what is needed — and at the same time to keep the expense of administration within bounds, and avoid the accumulation of open shelves filled with duplicates of popular books, books which cost much money to get, more to keep, and a great deal to use. The weight of evidence is in favor of the circulation of the main bulk of books in fixed sets, and of keeping for the open shelves only such books as are not suitable for general traveling library use.

A new system of traveling libraries is advised to start with fixed collections, letting the evolution to the combination plan come in due time, if justified by experience.

Special study libraries. The study library on special subjects was probably first made popular in New York. The notion that a club or an individual wishing to study a subject might be able to obtain an all-round selection of books spread to other states. These were fixed collections. Several commissions circulate fixed collections for study and debate.

In its last analysis, however, it has come to be regarded as a cumbersome and highly expensive method of fostering the study idea. The open shelves of the special loan department, from which can be picked out just the material that a given patron, whether club or individual needs, and does not possess, have been found to be far more serviceable and less costly than to compel patrons to borrow fixed collections, which may unnecessarily duplicate material already in the possession of the borrower. The open shelf plan for special loan work is proving its merits — even as the fixed collection is justly popular for traveling library purposes.

Study outlines. With the spread of the home study idea comes the demand, not only for books, but for study outlines. Conspicuous among the states that have recognized

this is New York, through its Home education department. The outlines published in their annual report on study clubs, their university extension syllabuses, and similar printed outlines from other sources must become part of the equipment of every traveling library system that attempts to work with the study clubs. It is inevitable that people who apply for books should ask for suggestions as to how and what to study. The Home education department in New York is but a foreshadowing of what all traveling library systems will, to a greater or less degree, find it necessary to be. A helpful plan for division of labor has been evolved in Iowa, whereby the program committee of the state Federation of women's clubs submits its list of programs for club work to the Commission, and leaves to the special loan department of the traveling libraries the task of furnishing the books. Similar coöperation between the clubs and the traveling library is practised in other states.

Conditions of lending. Since the object of a traveling library system is to increase the use of books, the conditions upon which they may be borrowed are, as a rule, simply the signed agreement of three or more tax payers to pay the necessary charges, to circulate the books and make good unnecessary loss or damage. In one state the number of signers is not stipulated, nor is it required that they be tax payers. This plan of relying entirely on the honesty of people has been abundantly satisfactory, for people who want to use traveling libraries are usually honest people.

The length of time that libraries remain in one place varies from 3 months to 8 months with privilege of renewal in most cases. For the average community, the shorter period is usually sufficient, and the opportunity to renew gives ample time to all.

Statutes usually specify whether or not borrowers are to pay transportation. Some states require the prepayment of a fixed fee, which is supposed to cover the entire cost of transportation — either for a single library, or for all libraries sent during the year to a place. Since shipments are for varying distances, this fee must be large enough so that

nearby points really pay part of the transportation on the libraries that go to the far corners of a state. It is the simplest method of disposing of the question, if the laws of the state permit a commission to handle freely a cash fund. The bookkeeping connected with this method is of trifling moment compared with that pertaining to a system where the borrowing community pays transportation and drayage, either or both ways. If the going trip is at the borrower's expense, it is a simple matter to bill the box through, "collect" with "advance charges" for drayage included. The borrower, thus, must pay these charges before he can get the books. If the return trip is also at the borrower's expense, the story is quite different. The librarian of a traveling library may have a poor memory and forget to prepay freight and drayage, or freight may be prepaid, and drayage money not advanced. The average rural freight agent frequently refuses to accept "advance charges" for drayage, and the librarian is thus forced to send money or stamps to the center for this drayage charge. Of course, accounts have to be kept — accounts which consume much time. Where drayage at the center is 25 cents each way, it is as cheap, and much easier to ship by express up to a distance of 50 miles by rail. Few traveling library systems in this country enjoy special freight and express privileges, and it is not likely that a general reduction can be obtained until the League of library commissions can do some systematic work in this direction.

Shipping case. Practise varies as to whether shipping boxes or book cases are used. The original New York idea was that of a book case enclosed in a shipping box. This combination was expensive, and was long since abandoned for cheap shipping boxes of varying sizes, costing from 32 to 84 cents each. Uniform collections are usually sent in standard sized packing boxes, with lids, either screwed or locked. The cost of these varies from $1.50 to $3 as an average.

In one traveling library system boxes, made of poplar, outside dimensions being 33 inches by 13 inches by 13 inches,

having double ends with handholds cut in them, screwed, and the end screws dodged, the lid fastened by strap hinges, with hasp and staple held in place by stovebolts, countersunk, and padlock, have been in use 4 years. Owing to splitting and warping of insufficiently seasoned wood, additional screws have sometimes to be put in the ends, after a few trips. Quite infrequently, a hasp or a staple gives way. The lids have cleats screwed on, and the outside end pieces project above the inside end and sides just the thickness of the lid. This gives hollow corners, and prevents strain on the lid. A few of these boxes, after 4 years of traveling in a state of magnificent distances need new outside end pieces. They will hold, properly wrapped, probably 60 average books. The earlier boxes in the series cost $1.55 each, but the increased cost of lumber has brought the last ones up to $2.80 each. The padlocks in use cost $2 a dozen. When packed with 40 to 50 books, the boxes weigh about 90 pounds. In some places these boxes are made to do duty as book cases, but, usually, a shelf or table is available for that purpose.

Some traveling library workers prefer screws for fastening the lids. It is the cheaper method, so far as money goes, up to the point where the edges of the box become incapable of holding any more screws. If the Secretary of a library commission is a woman, and also the shipping clerk of the traveling libraries, as is apt to be the case with a new system, unless she has had a preliminary training as a carpenter, she will find padlocks much easier to manage.

Traveling library in circulation. The library should be in charge of an interested librarian and be kept in a public place, where people will feel free to go. No one should be charged a fee for its use. One of the best librarians in one traveling library system is a barber who keeps the books in his shop. Another, who has the true library spirit, keeps the books in his furniture and undertaking store in a very small village. A dwelling is not so suitable a place as a store, postoffice, or telephone exchange, because many people do not feel free to go into a home.

Borrowers are usually required to sign an agreement to observe the rules for the circulation and care of the books. The ordinary public library rules concerning the length of time for keeping the books, fines and other details prevail. The money from fines is, in most cases, applied to the payment of transportation charges.

The charging systems in use vary, but book card and pocket, and in some cases, dating slips and readers' cards are used. The date slip is of so little use in a traveling library that it has been abandoned by some systems, while a borrower's card has, by some, never been considered necessary. Where a librarian is lending only 50 books, a charging tray can be dispensed with, though some systems use it. The librarian can report the number of new borrowers each time from the number of borrowers' agreement signatures, and the center can count the circulation from the books cards, so there is no need of elaborate charging machinery.

Printed catalogs are in use in some systems, have been abandoned in others, and never needed in others. Most of those using them incline to the belief that patrons make good use of them, and so justify the expense. The local newspaper, if the library is in a village, is glad to print a list of the books. The Oregon commission has printed lists of the books in its several traveling libraries in the form of book marks, very cleverly arranged so as to indicate the general character of the books. A new system can afford to wait for a demand for catalogs before printing them. Some systems, notably Iowa and Indiana, have printed consolidated lists of the books in their traveling libraries.

Return of the books. In due course of time, books must be returned to the center for inspection, records and repairs. All efforts to reduce expense of transportation to borrowing communities by transferring from one point to another without going back to the center will result in lost and badly damaged books, with no way of fixing the responsibility therefor. So thoroughly has this been demonstrated that a new system would do well to avoid even experiment in this direction.

To unpack, check up, clean and make return records, write new book cards, send worn books to the bindery, replace missing books, and to repack and ship a 50 volume traveling library requires the equivalent of at least half a day's time of a skilled, expeditious and able bodied worker. It will thus be seen that the mere mechanical side of keeping 100 traveling libraries in circulation, with the average number of trips a year, will take most of the time of one person.

Making the libraries more useful. The librarians of traveling libraries can be made to do much effective work by constant attention from the center. Circular letters, giving helpful suggestions, a column in the Bulletin devoted to reports from the traveling libraries, visits from the field worker — all these help. In addition, if librarians can be induced to attend library association meetings, and institutes, the traveling libraries can accomplish wonderful results. Rural library associations, under direction from the center, can use the material in the traveling library systematically for the general welfare of the communities.

Forms, Blanks and Records in use in various Traveling Library Systems

1. Circular of information.
2. Application blank or card, containing following items:—
   a. Name of place to which library is to be sent.
   b. Agreement properly to care for and circulate the books, etc.
   c. Name and shipping and postoffice address of librarian.
3. Place card or blank, filed alphabetically, showing
   a. Name of place.
   b. Number of library, and date of sending and return.
   c. Number of borrowers (if such item is desired).
   d. Total circulation.
   e. Name of librarian.

In some systems, the application and place cards are combined.

4. Chronological record of dates of shipments, for convenience in sending "due" notices.

5. Printed or typewritten list of books actually sent, filed by name of place, showing
   a. Date of shipment.
   b. Circulation of each volume.
6. Notification of shipment.
7. Instructions to librarians.
8. "Due" postal.
9. Librarian's report, showing
   a. Name of place.
   b. Place where library was kept.
   c. Hours of opening.
   d. Number of borrowers.
   e. Amount forwarded for lost or damaged books.
   f. Desire for another library.
   g. Remarks.
   h. Librarian's signature.

Some systems do not use so full a form for the librarian's report.

10. Card or blank, filed by name or number of library, showing
   a. Name or number of library.
   b. Number of books in library.
   c. Places to which sent, and dates of sending and returning.
   d. Circulation, classified.
   e. Number of borrowers.
   f. Condition of books on return, names of lost or damaged books, number of books sent to bindery after each trip, etc.
11. Statistical history blanks, showing
   a. Numbers or names of all libraries.
   b. Average number of books per library.
   c. Number of trips made by each, and total trips for all.
   d. Total circulation of each and all.

In order to get statistics of circulation for annual reports.

Charging System

12. Borrower's agreement card, filed alphabetically by name of borrower and kept by the librarian of the traveling library, or a single agreement blank signed by all the borrowers at a station.

13. Book pocket, giving printed rules, and number or name of library.

14. Book card, giving number or name of library, author and title of book, and columns for name of borrower and dates of loan and return.

Other office records

15. "Lost book," itemizing books not returned with their libraries, showing

a. Author and title of missing book.
b. Number or name of library, and date of its return without book.
c. Name of place responsible for loss.
d. "Remarks" column, in which write whether finally found and returned, or replaced by new copy, and who paid for the new book.

16. "Worn out" book, showing books discarded and replaced by the center.
17. Bindery record.
18. Cash book, showing receipts for lost and damaged books, and expenditures.

Shipping the books

19. If more than one style of lock is in use, a keyboard in the office for duplicate keys.
20. Envelope inside box lid (Tension document envelope is good) to hold librarian's report blank, instructions and borrowers' agreement cards.
21. If desired, a colored placard, also inside box lid, recapitulating instructions.
22. Cash book for money and stamps sent for return drayage.
23. Shipping tags.

Accessioning and cataloging

24. Any favored style of accession book or card.
25. Author card for catalog, giving author, title, accession number, and number of library to which the book belongs.

Special loan records

26. Accession record.
27. Catalog as for traveling libraries for a small collection. After perhaps 1000 volumes, it may be necessary to classify, book number and label, and write simple subject cards.

28. Book card, kept in special loan charging file, alphabetically by author, giving date of loan and address of borrower.
29. Place card, showing all loans made to a place, with dates of sending and return.
30. Chronological record, for "due" notices.
31. If desired, a duplicate book card in pocket, as for traveling libraries.

These forms and business methods naturally refer only to the systems operating fixed collections of traveling libraries, and open shelf collections for special loans. They represent a composite of methods in use. There is bound to be much difference of opinion as to the essentials, and even as to the aims of traveling libraries.

The A.L.A. Publishing Board has a set of the blanks used by the various commissions which responsible persons may borrow for examination.

The Home Education Bulletin, no. 40 published by the University of the State of New York shows forms used in N. Y. State.

Traveling library expenditures. It is impossible to get statistics that will give any adequate idea as to how much traveling libraries are costing the several states. Most of these systems are conducted by state libraries or library commissions in connection with manifold other activities.

Traveling Library Statistics

State	No. of vols. in T. L. dept.	No. of vols. in a library	Fixed sets or open shelf	Shipped in	Boxes fastened by	Cost of boxes, etc.
California	10,250	50	fixed	boxes	screws	$ .65
Colorado	8,000	50	fixed	case & box	bolts	5.00
Connecticut						
Delaware	2,800	50	fixed	case & box	screws	7.50
Indiana	5,866	40	fixed	boxes	screws	.60–1.10
Iowa	14,392	50	fixed	boxes	screws	2.50
Kansas	20,909	50	open	boxes	locks	2.75
Maryland	2,890	35	fixed	cases	locks	5.00
Michigan	25,000	50	fixed	case & box	screws	4.00
Minnesota	5,385	50 and 25	fixed	cases	bars	3.85–4.50
Nebraska	4,200	40	fixed	boxes	locks	2.80
New Jersey	7,000	50	open	case & box	screws	10.00
New York	75,000	varied	both	boxes	screws	.32–.84
Ohio			open	boxes		
Oregon	2,500	60 and 25	fixed	boxes	screws	1.50
Pennsylvania		50	open	case & box	screws	
Vermont	2,600	45	fixed	cases	locks	4.50
Washington	3,550	42	fixed	cases	locks	2.75
Wisconsin	18,161	60 and 25	fixed	boxes	screws	1.30

State	Fee or transportation	Printed catalogs	No. of vols. for special loans	Loaned separately or in sets
California	paid by State	yes	State library	separately
Colorado	charges by borrowers	no	small collection	separately
Connecticut				
Delaware	no charges			
Indiana	charges by borrowers	yes	921	both
Iowa	charges by borrowers	no	7692	separately
Kansas	$2.00 fee	no		
Maryland	.50 fee	no		
Michigan	5.00 per year	yes	State library	separatley
Minnesota	1.00, and .50 fee	yes	1140 & study libs.	both
Nebraska	charges by borrowers	no	1100	separately
New Jersey	2.00 per year	no		separately
New York	fee	partially		separately
Ohio	charges by borrowers			separately
Oregon	charges by borrowers	yes	study libraries	sets
Pennsylvania	1.00 fee	no		separately
Vermont	charges by borrowers	yes		
Washington	both ways	yes		separately
Wisconsin	charges by borrowers	yes	study libraries	sets

List of French fiction by Mme Sophie Cornu and William Beer. Paper, 5 cents.

List of selected German books. *In press.*

List of Italian books. *In press.*

Card Publications

1 Catalog cards for current periodical publications.
2 Catalog cards for various sets of periodicals and for books of composite authorship.
3 Catalog cards for current books in English and American History, with annotations.
4 Catalog cards for current bibliographical publications.

For detailed information regarding card publications apply directly to the Publishing Board, 34 Newbury St., Boston, Mass.

Library Tracts

1 Why do we need a public library?
2 How to start a public library, by Dr G. E. Wire.
3 Traveling libraries, by F. A. Hutchins.
4 Library rooms and buildings, by C. C. Soule.
5 Notes from the art section of a library, by C. A. Cutter.
8 A village library, by Mary Anna Tarbell.

Paper, each, 5 cents. Special reduced prices when ordered in lots of 50 or more.

Library Handbooks

1 Essentials in library administration, by L. E. Stearns.
2 Cataloging for small libraries, by Theresa Hitchler. Paper, each, 15 cents. $5.00 per 100.
3 Management of traveling libraries, by Edna D. Bullock. Paper, each, 15 cents.

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